

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MERSEY WATERFRONT REGIONAL PARK BOARD**

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**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 This report seeks approval of a Mersey Waterfront Regional Park project known as The Mersey Observatory.

**2.0 THE PROJECT**

**2.1 The Mersey Observatory**

2.1.1 The Mersey Observatory project aims to create a landmark visitor attraction at a key gateway site to the Mersey Estuary in Sefton. The project is led by the Mersey Basin Campaign with key stakeholders including: Peel Ports, Sefton Council, Waterloo Residents Association, Mersey Waterfront, the North West Development Agency and Liverpool Biennial.

2.1.2 Funding for a feasibility study was secured from Mersey Waterfront in December 2006 and the study was completed in March 2007 by a consultant team led by AMION Consulting. The team included Taylor Young (architects), Turner and Townsend (cost consultants), Faber Maunsell (engineering and transport), and Locum Destination Consulting (tourism).

2.1.3 The study's preferred option is to demolish the existing radar tower and create a new purpose built observatory in its place. The proposal would include access to the site from Crosby Marina, the construction of ground level space to accommodate a café, retail and interpretation activities. The tower itself could offer two viewing platforms: a lower enclosed platform; and an upper exposed platform, 40m above ground level.

2.1.4 Following on from the feasibility study the project was presented to the RENEW Regional Design Panel for discussion and advice. This Panel concluded that an international design competition should be launched to select a design for this key waterfront location.

2.1.5 The Mersey Basin Campaign submitted a funding application for £100,000 to MWRP to fully fund this international design competition and this was approved by the Mersey Waterfront Board on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2007.

**3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 This project is funded by Mersey Waterfront, a financial resource which is made available by the North West Regional Development Agency to Wirral Council who are the Accountable Body for the MWRP.

#### **4.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None.

#### **5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Mersey Waterfront promotes equal opportunities for all.

#### **6.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no known Community Safety implications arising directly from this report.

#### **7.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 All the projects will be implemented in keeping with the principles of Agenda 21. In particular, they will seek to address:

- Efficient use of resources and energy
- Minimisation of waste
- Reduction of pollution
- Promotion of accessibility and sustainable transport
- Enrichment of local identity

#### **8.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no known Planning implications arising directly from this report.

#### **9.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None.

#### **10.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 None.

#### **11.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 This report will be of interest to all members of the Council.

#### **12.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

12.1 Mersey Waterfront papers were used in the preparation of this report and these are held in the Regeneration Department at Wallasey Town Hall.

#### **13.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

13.1 It is recommended that:

- a) A MWRP grant of £100,000 be approved to the Mersey Basin Campaign to fully fund the international design competition for the Mersey Observatory Project.

Alan Stennard  
Director of Regeneration

This report was prepared by David Ball, Head of Housing and Regeneration who can be contacted on 691 8395.